REMARKS

By the Amendment, Applicants amend claims 12, 15, and 16, and add new claim 17 to address other aspects of the present invention. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 12 and 15-17 will be pending.

In the final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 12, 15, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,058,397 to Barrus et al. ("Barrus") in view of Hon Wai Chun et al., "Intelligent critic system for architectural design," IEEE Transactions on Knowledge and Data Engineering, Volume 9, Issue 4, July-August 1997 ("Chun").[1]

Regarding the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Applicants respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of claims 12, 15, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barrus in view of Chun, because a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness based on a combination or suggestion of prior art, "Office personnel must articulate . . . a finding that the prior art included each element claimed, although not necessarily in a single prior art reference, with the only difference between the claimed invention and the prior art being the lack of actual combination of the elements in a single prior art reference." M.P.E.P. § 2143.A (8th edition, revision 6).

Independent claim 12, as amended,[2] recites a combination including, for example, "selection means for selecting, based on the characteristics of the plurality of

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[1] The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

[2] Support for the amendments may be found at, for example, page 18 of the specification.

areas included in the first parameter, one component from among the plurality of components for which the second parameter has been designated . . . wherein the plurality of components are selected based upon at least one condition corresponding to a resident of the virtual space." Barrus fails to teach or suggest at least these features of amended claim 12.

Barrus teaches "A virtual reality environment creation, modification and delivery system [that] stores information representing the virtual reality environment in a database where portions of it may be created, modified or delivered without affecting other portions. The database may be accessed, for example, over a network such as a wide area network, to allow database records to be individually updated without affecting other records in the database." Barrus, Abstract. However, Barrus fails to teach or suggest "selection means for selecting, based on the characteristics of the plurality of areas included in the first parameter, one component from among the plurality of components for which the second parameter has been designated . . . wherein the plurality of components are selected based upon at least one condition corresponding to a resident of the virtual space," as recited in amended claim 12 (emphasis added).[3]

Chun fails to cure the deficiencies of Barrus. The Examiner alleges that "Chun et al. teaches . . . characteristics of the plurality of areas, such as a kitchen area or a bedroom area, are used to define which components should be selected for a particular area, since a stove, refrigerator and/or dining room table would be possible components

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[3] The Examiner concedes that "[Barrus] does not specifically teach selecting, based on the characteristics of the plurality of areas included in the first parameter, one component from among the plurality of components for which the second parameter has been designated." (Office Action at 4.)

for a kitchen area but would not belong in a bedroom area/locale and thus a first

parameter would include information regarding the type of area being

generated/modified." (Office Action at 4.) Applicants respectfully disagree.

However, even assuming the Examiner's allegation is true, which Applicants do

not concede, <u>Chun's</u> alleged teaching of arranging certain components in room areas

does <u>not</u> constitute "selection means for selecting, based on the characteristics of the

plurality of areas included in the first parameter, one component from among the

plurality of components for which the second parameter has been designated . . .

<u>wherein the plurality of components are selected based upon at least one condition</u>

<u>corresponding to a resident of the virtual space,</u>" as recited in amended claim 12

(emphasis added).

Applicants further point out that these recited features of amended claim 12 may

be advantageous over applied prior art references in replying to the needs including

providing images full of reality and ambience, securing a certain game amusement

pursuant to image processing, reducing the vast operational load in the layout of rooms,

cutting out the need for securing a memory with a large storage size, and decreasing

the reading time and reading frequency of the memory.

Therefore, neither <u>Barrus</u> nor <u>Chun</u>, taken alone or in any reasonable

combination, teaches or suggests all elements of amended claim 12. A *prima facie*

case of obviousness has not been established. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully

request withdrawal of the Section 103(a) rejection of amended claim 12.

Further, amended independent claims 15 and 16, while of different scope,

include similar recitations to those of amended claim 12. Amended claims 15 and 16

are therefore also allowable for at least the same reasons stated above with respect to amended claim 12. Applicants also respectfully request withdrawal of the Section 103(a) rejection of amended claims 15 and 16.

Regarding the newly added claim

Applicants have added claim 17 to address other aspects of the present invention. Support for claim 17 may be found at, for example, page 18 of the specification. Claim 17 is also allowable at least due to its dependency upon amended claim 12. Further, Barrus in view of Chun fail to teach or suggest at least "wherein the at least one condition includes one or more of gender, age, marital status, family make-up, health condition, and financial status," as recited in claim 17.
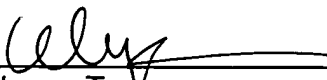
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: February 27, 2008   By: _____
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